

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 /072 W
-----100546 192256Z /72

R 191200Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY OSLO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4249
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 3744

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, NO
SUBJ: LABOR PARTY FINDS DRIVING BETTER IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

1. SUMMARY: DURING RECENT WEEKS LEFT SOCIALIST PARTY (SV) WHOSE 16 STORTING SEATS HAVE ALLOWED THE LABOR PARTY TO HOLD A ONE-SEAT COMBINED MAJORITY IN THE STORTING SINCE 1973, HAS LOOSED A SERIES OF ALLEGATIONS AND REVELATIONS INVOLVING SECRET INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS IN THE HOPE OF GENERATING A CAMPAIGN ISSUE THAT COULD GAIN SUPPORT FOR ITS FAR LEFT POLICIES AND CANDIDATES. AT THE SAME TIME THE LABOR PARTY HAS ESCHEWED THE LEFTIST LINE. BOTH BY WORDS AND ACTTIONS LABOR HAS CONTINUED TO COURT THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD VOTERS WHO, ALMOST ALL AGREE, HOLD THE KEY TO THE SEPTEMBER 12 ELECTION. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SV, THROUGH ITS WEEKLY JOURNAL NY TID, HAS, FOR SOME TIME PAST, BEEN ATTEMPTING TO SHOW THAT THE GON HAS, OVER THE YEARS, BEEN MISMANAGING THE NATION'S DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT, HAS EXCEEDED THE LIMITS OF NORWAY'S DEFENSE POLICIES
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AND HAS DECEIVED THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE SCOPE OF THE U.S. -NORWEGIAN DEFENSE COOPERATION.

3. THE NY TID BARRAGE HAS INCLUDED ACCUSATIONS ABOUT LORAN C AND CLARINET PILGRIM, AN EXPOSE OF NORWEGIAN MOUNTED SPY OPERATIONS, BASED IN FINLAND AND CARRIED OUT IN THE USSR 20 YEARS AGO AND ALLEGATIONS OF COVERT U.S.-NORWEGIAN CO-

OPERATION IN A 1960S COASTAL SURVEILLANCE EFFORT KNOWN AS "OPERATION HOLYSTONE."

4. SUBSEQUENT TO THESE EFFORTS, WHICH DID LITTLE TO BOOST THE SV'S SAGGING ELECTORAL PROSPECTS, NY TID ANNOUNCED THAT IT HAD, AND WOULD SHORTLY MAKE PUBLIC, LISTS OF NORWEGIANS ENGAGED IN SECRET INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS. AT THIS POINT THE GON OPTED FOR STRONG MEASURES AGAINST THE GOVERNING COALITION'S JUNIOR (AND VERY LIMITED) PARTNER. POLICE CONFISCATED THE LISTS AND INTERROGATED NUMBER OF WITNESSES. TWO PEOPLE, IVAR JOHNSEN, A NY TID STAFFER, AND TROND JENSEN, OWNER OF THE APARTMENT WHERE THE LISTS WERE FOUND, ARE BEING HELD BY THE POLICE AND FACE POSSIBLE INDICTMENT UNDER NORWAY'S ESPIONAGE LAWS.

5. PRIME MINISTER NORDLI, IN AN AUG 14 CAMPAIGN SPEECH, DREW THE LINE CLEARLY. HE UNDERSCORED THE NEED FOR SELF-DISCIPLINE AND LOYALTY TO THE DEMOCRACY. HE NOTED THAT WHILE THE GON WOULD CONTINUE TO BE RESTRAINED IN THE USE OF SECRECY, IT COULD NOT, WHEN DEFENDING VITAL INTERESTS, LET INDIVIDUALS DETERMINE, AT THEIR OWN DISCRETION WHAT TO KEEP SECRET.

6. THE LABOR PARTY'S POSITION WAS MADE CLEAR AGAIN ON AUG 15 BY PARTY CHAIRMAN STEEN, WHO IS FREQUENTLY FOUND POLITICALLY TO THE LEFT OF THE PRIME MINISTER. ADDRESSING CONFIDENTIAL

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A MEETING IN DRAMMEN, H ESSENTIALLY REPEATED NORDLI'S STATEMENT ON THE NEED FOR SECRET SERVICES IN THE COUNTRY'S DEFENSE ACTIVITIES.

7. TWO DAYS LATER, PER HYSING-DAHL, CHAIRMAN OF THE STORTING DEFENSE COMMITTEE, ONE THE STORTING'S MORE CONSERVATIVE LEADERS, AUTHORED A LONG ARTICLE IN AFTENPOSTED POINTING OUT THE NEED FOR SECRET SERVICES IN THE PROTECTION OF NORWEGIAN DEMOCRACY.

8. COMMENT: THE STRONG STATEMENTS BY CENTERIST, AS WELL AS LEFT-LEANING LABOR PARTY OFFICIALS HAVE UNDERSCORED THE PARTY'S DETERMINATION TO PROJECT ITSELF AS A MODERATE, CENTRIST GROUP, WITH THE EXPERIENCE AND CAPACITY TO CONTINUE GOVERNING NORWAY. THE SUPPORT FOR THE FAR LEFT THAT, FOUR YEARS AGO, RESULTED IN 16 STORTING SEATS FOR THE SV, HAS LARGELY EVAPORATED. SV IS NOT EXPECTED TO EMERGE FROM THE SEPT 12 VOTING WITH ONLY THREE TO FIVE SEATS. LABOR THUS FINDS NO UTILITY IN PURSUING A SHRINKING FAR LEFT VOTE, WHICH, IN ANY EVENT, HAS NO PLACE ELSE TO GO BUT BACK INTO THE LABOR FOLD. ALMOST ALL THE POLLS AND POLITICAL OBSERVERS AGREE THAT THE ELECTIONS WILL BE DECIDED BY A SHIFT OF ONE OR TWO PERCENTAGE POINTS, THE 1977 VOTER, MORE PROSPEROUS THAN EVER BEFORE, APPEARS TO

WANT A GOVERNMENT THAT WILL NOT BE DISRUPTIVE BUT WILL EFFECTIVELY MAINTAIN BOTH THE NEW PROSPERITY AND NORWAY'S WELL REGARDED PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND, ADDITIONALLY, HAVE THE EXPERTISE TO GUIDE THE COUNTRY THROUGH THE PERIOD OF SOCIAL CHANGE THAT IS EXPECTED TO ACCOMPANY THE INFLOW OF OIL REVENUES IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS. THE ELECTORAL BATTLE THUS, IS NOT BETWEEN RIGHT AND LEFT, BUT RIGHT-CENTER/LEFT CENTER. THE LABOR PARTY LEADERS, ACCORDINGLY, HAVE FOUND SV'S ACTIVITIES INCREASINGLY EMBARRASSING. THEIR ACTIONS AND WORDS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS HAVE BEEN MOTIVATED BOTH BY A GENUINE NEED TO PROTECT GON'S INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES AND BY THE POLITICAL NEED TO PUT MORE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE PARTY AND ITS FADING LIMITED COALITION PARTNER.

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